

## **REMARKS**

Claims 9, 11, 16, 22, 40-50, 62, 67, 70, and 71 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer pursuant to an restriction election. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to assert these claims in any future divisional or continuation applications.

The Examiner's requirement for restriction divided the application into 5 species as follows:

- I. The species of FIGS. 1-15;
- II. The species of FIGS. 17-19;
- III. The species of FIGS. 20-23;
- IV. The species of FIGS. 24-34; and
- V. The species of FIGS 35-37.

Applicants respectfully elect, with traverse, prosecution of Claims 1-8, 10, 12-15, 17-21, 23-39, 51-61, 63-66, 68-69, and 72-73 for Species I as identified by the Examiner as being shown by Figs 1-15.

Applicants respectfully point out that the Examiner has omitted FIGS. 16, 38, and 39 from the analysis of species. Applicants further respectfully submit that FIG. 16 should belong to Species I as FIG. 16 is a sectional view of the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 15 wherein the sectional view illustrated in FIG. 16 is taken along Line 16-16 of FIG. 15.

The Examiner has alleged that no claims were generic. Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's restriction requirement and the allegation that no generic claims exist and respectfully request that the restriction requirement be withdrawn.

FIGS. 1-37 illustrate various embodiments of slotted thread arrangements wherein slots are created by removing portions of threads in a substantially longitudinal direction or by not machining or milling protuberances in a predetermined circumferential space. Protuberances are created by the remaining thread array when the slots are created or by machining or milling the circumferential surface to create protuberances in a predetermined circumferential array. Applicants respectfully submit that the creation of the slots and protuberances is substantially independent of the type of thread profile existing or created in the male or female threaded connection. Further, when removing portions of the existing thread, to create the slots and the circumferential array of protuberances, the act of leaving a wrap of threads un-cut, such as illustrated in FIGS. 20 and 21, does not create a patentably distinct species but rather an

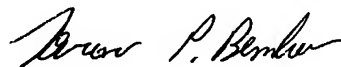
alternative embodiment.

Applicants still further respectfully submit that Claims 1, 23, 37, 51, and 69 are generic claims in that they claim a threaded connection comprising male and female connections each of which comprise arrays of circumferentially spaced protuberances which when aligned during the mating of the male and female ends allow the connections to slidably engage substantially in a direction parallel to the longitudinal axis of the respective connections. After such longitudinal engagement, the respective connections further mate when either connection is rotated with respect to the other connection.

#### Conclusion

In light of the above restriction election and amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that the application now stands in formal condition for allowance and courteously ask for this application be advanced to issue. The Applicants are of the opinion that no additional fees, beyond the requested one month extension, are required with the submission of this response. However, if additional fees are required, the Commissioner is hereby respectfully authorized to deduct such fees from Deposit Account Number 13-2166. Additionally, the Examiner is invited to telephone Applicants' attorney for additional clarification.

Respectfully submitted,



Taras P. Bemko  
Registration No. 52,609

Date: 8-16-04  
The Matthews Firm (Customer # 021897)  
2000 Bering, Ste. 700  
Houston, Texas 77057  
(713) 355-4200 - Telephone  
(713) 355-9689 - Facsimile